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Pollard may plead guilty to lesser charges in plea bargain

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Jonathan Jay Pollard, accused of spying for Israel, could plead guilty to reduced charges as early as today under a plea bargain being worked out by defense attorneys and the Justice Department, a source said yesterday.

The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the deal is near completion and could result in lesser charges for Mr. Pollard's wife, Anne Henderson-Pollard.

Mr. Pollard is scheduled to appear in U.S. District Court today, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The source declined to describe what charges the couple would plead guilty to, adding that there "are a few details to be ironed out."

Mr. Pollard, 31, a former civilian intelligence analyst with the Navy Investigative Service, provided prosecutors with information that is

expected to result in at least two more people being named co-conspirators in the case, it was reported last week.

The apparent climax of the case comes after reports that Mr. Pollard, who held top-secret clearance for research on terrorist activities, was part of an Israeli espionage ring better organized and financed than U.S. officials at first thought.

The Israeli government, however, has denied it operated such a ring in

the United States.

Mr. Pollard, arrested in front of the Israeli Embassy on Nov. 21, 1985, is charged with delivering classified documents to a foreign government, which carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. He has been in jail since his arrest.

His wife, released from jail in March on \$23,500 bond, is charged with unauthorized possession of national defense information. The charge carries a penalty of up to 10

years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Mrs. Pollard, 25, could not be reached for comment last night.

A plea bargain could defuse tensions over the trial between Israel and the United States. The investigation has been a source of embarrassment to both governments, who had signed a pledge not to spy on each other.

Within days of Mr. Pollard's arrest, two Israeli diplomats were re-

called from the United States. The Israeli government later said it had turned over all the documents involved and formally apologized to the United States for the incident.

There are "apparently a few details to work out" in the delicate plea agreement, a source said yesterday, adding that those involved in the negotiations "anticipate resolution tomorrow."

The negotiations first were reported May 30. Officials said Mr. Pollard was cooperating with government prosecutors in the hope of reducing the charges against him.